

REMARKS

Applicants request entry of the present amendments that conform the claims to U.S. practice. No new matter is being introduced by this Amendment as antecedent support is set forth in the original specification and in the original claims. Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made. The attached page is captioned "**Version with Markings to Show Changes Made.**"

Prosecution on the merits is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's Attorneys at the below-listed telephone number regarding this Preliminary Amendment or otherwise regarding the present application.

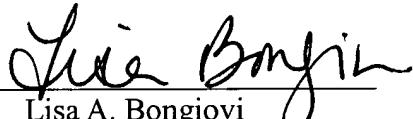
If there are any charges with respect to this Amendment or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130 maintained by Applicants' attorneys.

Respectfully submitted,

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MARKED UP VERSION TO SHOW CHANGES MADE**IN THE CLAIMS:**

A marked-up version of the Claims is as follows:

1. (Marked up/Amended) Ball cage for homokinetic joints, formed from a blank that is configured as a substantially annular spherical segment, the ball cage comprising: ~~with~~

window-type ball pockets located along ~~the~~an equator with substantially equator-parallel bearing surfaces that interact with ~~the~~ joint balls, with substantially annular functional zones that are designed at least on ~~the~~ outer ring edge areas and that interact with a joint bell, and with substantially annular functional areas that are designed on ~~the~~ inner ring areas and interact with the joint spider,

~~characterized by the fact~~

~~that wherein~~ on the blank at least some of the functional zones are elevated compared to the neighboring areas of the ball cage.

2. (Marked up/Amended) Ball cage pursuant to claim 1, ~~characterized by the fact that wherein~~ the blank is hardened before finishing the functional zones.

3. (Marked up/Amended) Ball cage pursuant to ~~one of the previous claims~~claim 2, characterized by the fact that ~~wherein~~ on the hardened blank only the elevated functional zones are processed through hard-turning.

4. (Marked up/Amended) Ball cage pursuant to ~~one of the previous claims~~claim 1, characterized by the fact that ~~wherein the blank~~ it contains turned, preferable hard-turned reference surfaces.

5. (Marked up/Amended) Ball cage pursuant to ~~one of the previous claims~~claim 1, characterized by the fact that ~~wherein~~ the functional zones, which have been hard-turned, are elevated compared to adjacent surfaces after ~~the~~a finishing process or are at the most on ~~the~~a same level.

6. (Marked up/Amended) Ball cage pursuant to ~~one of the previous claims~~claim 1, characterized by the fact that ~~wherein~~ the blank is formed in a rolling process.

7. (Marked up/Amended) Ball cage pursuant to ~~one of the previous claims~~claim 1, characterized by the fact that ~~wherein the recesses~~ window-type ball pockets are stamped.

8. (Marked up/Amended) Ball cage pursuant to ~~one of the previous claims~~ claim 7, characterized by the fact that wherein the window-type recesses ball pockets have such dimensions that the surfaces, on which the equator-parallel functional zones are designed, are longer than these and protrude on both sides beyond the functional zone.

9. (Marked up/Amended) Ball cage for homokinetic joints, formed from a blank that is configured as a substantially annular spherical segment, the ball cage comprising:

with window-type ball pockets located along the equator with substantially equator-parallel bearing surfaces that interact with the joint balls, with several substantially annular functional zones that are designed on ~~the outer ring edge areas~~ and that interact with a joint bell, and with several substantially annular functional areas that are designed on ~~the inner ring areas~~ and interact with the joint spider, ~~characterized by the fact that~~ wherein on the a finished component at least some of the functional zones are elevated compared to the adjacent surfaces or have at least ~~the~~ a same level.

10. (Marked up/Amended) Ball cage pursuant to ~~one of the claims 1 through 9,~~ characterized by the fact that wherein this the cage has functional zones that have an elevated design on ~~the fin areas~~, which separate the ball pockets, and has functional zones that have been hard-turned.